## THEATER

## Players bring warm glow to 'Lughnasa' despite drab story

Village Players present "Danc-ing at Lughnasa," 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, July 23-29, at the playhouse, corner of Hunter and Chestnut, downtown Birmingham. Tickets \$8, call (810) 644-2075.



Shot through Shot through with some moments that are utterly transfixing, and saffused with a kind of warm glow despite its drab (but appropriate) sets and costumes, the DAZ village Players' production of "Dancing at Lughnass" seems touched with enchantment.

cose-init family, who feel almost bone-deep need to dance and the minipy near Ballybeg. County significant of the first seet-to-the-bone drams is a sligis play structured along lines of Tennessee Williams of Glass Menageris. An one narrator, Michael (played

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with no frills by Ren Hall) looks back at two important days in his childhood, and we look back with him. We see his unmarried mother and her four sisters (all unmarried, too). We also see his uncle, as sping priest who has been on bome from his post in Unand because he is seriously III. Finally, we meet Michael's father, a philandering, irresistible gramophone salesman, who can dance the night seman, who can lead to the sales with the cracked mirror on the wall does not point toward a bright and abing future. Already, that future seems not point found in the live seems of the sales had been deep need to dance and play, but have so little music in their lives. Been member of this cast turns in a winning performance. One of

with each other. (Eric Kent Frans makes his debut as director. Let's hope he'll try again, very seen.)
Kathy Abelson, playing Michael's mother, Chris, is thin as awaif and pale, and might not embody the perfect actress to play a maternal role, no matter how young the child But, wen though abe looks pretty much like a kid herself, it turns out sho's executy on the mark here. She's especially touching as a young overburdened woman who can be absolutely transformed by the dreamy, transformed by the dreamy, transformed by the dreamy transformed by the dreamy and truly lowes.

As eldest sister Kate, Carol Aaron is also on target. When she makes her first appearance, in her shappiess, unsitractive dress and uty shoes, she seems so wooden you think stage fright may have spiled an upper hand. After swhile, though, it's obvious this stiff tensely poised woman is not her, but her character, a woman whose heart, after a lifetime of need, is threatming to turn frijdd.

Deborah Cohem plays slow-witted Rose with just the right touch of clumps lovesliness. In a

relatively small role, she's still one of the reasons this performance seems to glow from within. As an actress, she slways has about her an aura that sparkles a bit. (And you're going to love her "Weilingtons.")

Linds Hammeil, playing sister Meggie, supplies most of the comic touches in "Dancing at Lughnass" (pronounced aimarly to "unacy." by the way). With her powerhouse energy and her abouts determination to create her own fun when there's no other fun around, her Margie is perhaps the most lihable of all the sisters. And you sain't seen nothin' 'til you've seen her dance and shout.

In the role of Aggie, who is the least-understood of the sisters (but in the snd, perhaps the most couragrous), lovely Audra Lord does a fine job. She's especially effective as the sister who's trying hard to suppress her attraction to the charming, off-handed gramophone salesman.

As Gerry (the charmer), Geoff Larkin does what he's got to desappear charming.

Finally, Bob Casemore, playing the sickly Fr. Jack, shows (in extended dialogue that is more like monologue) that he is an actor who knows exactly how to involve an audience.

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an audience.
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Acting: Bob Casemore in a scene from the Village Players production of "Dancing at Lughnasa."

## SUNDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY





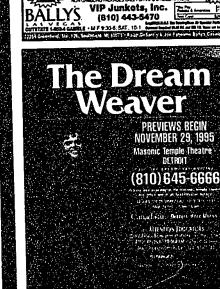




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